



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
NAVAL AIR SYSTEMS COMMAND
NAVAL AIR SYSTEMS COMMAND HEADQUARTERS
WASHINGTON, DC 20381

IN REPLY REFER TO

NAVAIRINST 5210.2B
AIR-OOP
22 Sep 1982

NAVAIR INSTRUCTION 5210.2B

From: Commander, Naval Air Systems Command

Subj: Documentation of research, development and testing work

1. Purpose. To restate standards for the preparation and maintenance of laboratory notebooks and other records of work done by Navy scientific, engineering and technical personnel engaged in research, development, and testing. The standards are intended to assist in documenting the Navy's research, development, and testing work for record purposes.
2. Cancellation. NAVAIR Instruction 5210.2A of 27 May 1975 is superseded. (R)
3. Background. The intangible nature of ideas and the ease with which experimental data can be lost has established the need for thorough documentation of the work of research and development personnel to inform others, to evaluate accomplishments, to ensure recognition for successful investigators, and to establish and protect the Government's rights in innovations, particularly in the event of patent litigation. (R)
4. Types of Records. In general, information on research, development, and testing work is of five types: (R)
 - a. Statistical data. Numerical data, often readings of instruments and equipment, which may be maintained in tabular form. This also may include calculations and rearrangements of the data to reflect different factors as desired, computer printouts and mathematical models.
 - b. Machine data. Information which is recorded on tapes, discs, films, (R or other media either for mechanically or electronically interpreting or preserving information, or for performing or other use in the operations of computers. This may include computer software (both programs and data bases).
 - c. Sketches and drawings. All forms of mechanical drawings, wiring diagrams, curves, sketches, photographs, and other forms of visual illustration.
 - d. Administrative data and reports. Project authorizations and assignments, allocations of funds, miscellaneous correspondence, and progress and completion reports.
 - e. Narrative data. Handwritten notes which express novel concepts, conditions of tests or plan of approach to problems, observations, modifications, formulae, unusual or significant phenomena, findings and results, and other items of interest expressed in narrative form.

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5. Methods of Preserving Information. Scientists and engineers in research units should make use of case files and laboratory notebooks (bound notebooks). Through appropriate use of these two devices, uniformity and completeness can be achieved in documentation of research, development, and testing work.

a. File folders, often known as project or case files, should be established to retain statistical data, sketches and drawings, and administrative data and reports as defined in paragraphs 4a, c and d above. Machine data (paragraph 4b) may sometimes be retained in file folders though the special forms taken by tapes, discs, films and other mechanically or electronically produced records may often require special equipment.

b. Laboratory notebooks should be used to record narrative data (paragraph 4e). In addition, the laboratory notebook will often be the best place for initially recording rough sketches, curves, and diagrams drawn to illustrate ideas contained in the notebooks. Notebooks need not be diaries. The amount of information written in notebooks and the length of time between entries are governed by the work. Some projects will require almost daily entries while others will not. Notations should be made in notebooks referencing pertinent material maintained in case files or other special equipment.

6. Laboratory Notebooks. Naval activities should provide notebooks, for use of scientific and technical research personnel, of the kind stocked by the Naval Publications and Forms Center, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and available on order therefrom by stock numbers 0515 077 0000 and 0515 079 0000 for the 32 (P-1520) and 96 (P-1521) page sizes, respectively. These stock notebooks were designed with technical and legal effectiveness in mind.

7. Marking of Entries. All entries in notebooks should be dated and signed by the writer (initials acceptable). In addition, where a single notebook is being used to record information on more than one subject, it is well to precede the entries with the subject of the entry. Signatures and dates should be placed at the end of the entry.

R) 8. Witnessing of Notebook Entries. Entries in notebooks are often of value as evidence only when witnessed by some individual other than the person making the notebook entries. When a patent or other dispute arises, it is desirable to have the personal testimony of witnesses to verify the claims of the parties to the dispute. The signature of witnesses on notebook entries not only serves to authenticate the entry itself, but also serves as a record of who may be called to testify on the matter. Persons maintaining notebooks should request that someone, other than the coinventor, competent to understand the material, read and witness entries whenever there is a possibility that inventions may result from the work. In those situations where inventions rarely occur, witnessing will be required infrequently. In other situations where inventions occur frequently, or where it is difficult to recognize ideas of a patentable nature, it may be well to establish procedures for periodic review and witnessing of notebooks.

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9. Registration of Notebooks. Every research, development, and testing activity should maintain a record of the assignment of notebooks to individuals. Laboratory notebooks are the property of the Navy and not the property of the individuals who maintain them. Procedures should be established to assure that notebooks are assigned to scientific and technical personnel when employed and are turned in when these individuals leave the service of the activities where they are employed. Procedures may also be established to furnish copies of notebooks for former employees provided appropriate security regulations are observed. The activities should retain in their files for evidentiary purposes all notebooks returned by their employees.

10. Action. All scientific, engineering and technical research personnel who accumulate data (paragraph 4a) should maintain laboratory notebooks. Addressees in the Naval Air Systems Command are requested to ensure compliance with the standards set forth in this instruction by appropriate research, development, and testing activities under their cognizance.


R. D. JOHNSON
Acting Vice Commander

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